Welcome to the Pinellas County 2010-2011 Voter Guide

This voter guide will give you an overview of the optical scan voting system we are using here in Pinellas County. All Florida voters vote a paper optical scan ballot whether voting by mail, at an early voting site or at the polls on Election Day.

This guide will also show you how to register to vote and update your voter registration record; how to request a mail ballot or vote early; and how to prepare for Election Day.

Voting is one of your most important rights as a United States citizen. We encourage you to register to vote and to participate in our representative democracy by voting. Make your mark and make it count!

Deborah Clark
Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections
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Voter Registration

Requirements

- Be a United States citizen
- Be at least 18 years old; or you may preregister if you are 16 or 17 years old
- Have no current court judgment of mental incapacity with respect to voting in Florida or another state
- Have no felony conviction, or have your civil rights restored by law if ever convicted of a felony. Contact the Office of Executive Clemency at (800) 435-8286 to confirm your rights are restored.
- Be registered only in this county and state, and acknowledge that any prior registration will be disclosed and canceled.

Locations

- Supervisor of Elections offices (see page 15 for locations)
- Driver license offices
- Public assistance offices
- Public libraries
- Offices that serve people with disabilities
- Armed forces recruitment offices
- Centers for independent living
- Online: www.votepinellas.com — download an application
- By mail: Pick up an application at any of the above locations, complete and mail it to any Supervisor of Elections office (see page 15 for addresses)

Deadlines

Remember:
- Voter registration deadline is 29 days prior to any election
- You must be registered with a political party in order to vote in that party’s primary elections
- Any political party change must be made at least 29 days prior to a partisan primary election in order to be valid for that election
Florida's Primary Elections

Florida has closed primaries. Only voters registered with a political party may vote in that party’s primary election. All registered voters, regardless of party affiliation, may vote on issues and nonpartisan races. If all candidates in a race have the same party affiliation and the winner of the primary election will have no opposition in the general election, all eligible voters, regardless of party affiliation, may vote in the primary election for that race. This is known as a universal primary.

Update Your Record

Update your voter registration record to avoid delays at the polls on Election Day

- Update your address by calling the Supervisor of Elections office at (727) 464-6788.
- Update your name, address, party or signature by completing a voter registration application with the changes and mailing or delivering it to any Elections office.
- It is important to update your signature in our voter file. This signature must match your signature on a mail ballot certificate envelope in order for your ballot to count. This signature also is used to verify your signature on a candidate or initiative petition.
- Signature updates may be made at any time, but must be received before mail ballots are canvassed in order to be accepted for an election. (F.S. 98.077)
- Make updates online at www.votepinellas.com by downloading a voter registration application.

Bring Proper Identification

Florida law requires voters to show both picture and signature ID when voting early or at the polls. Without valid and current ID, a voter may vote a provisional ballot, which will be evaluated by the Canvassing Board for eligibility.

Acceptable valid and current forms of ID include:

- Florida driver license or Florida identification card
- US Passport
- Military ID
- Retirement Center ID
- Public Assistance ID
- Debit or credit card
- Student ID
- Neighborhood Association ID

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REQUESTING A MAIL BALLOT

- Any registered voter may vote by mail
- Florida law requires that ALL accepted mail ballots be included in the official final election results
- The deadline to request a ballot be mailed to you is 5 p.m. on the 6th day prior to an election
- To request a mail ballot, call (727) 464-6788 or visit www.votepinellas.com

REQUESTING YOUR MAIL BALLOT:
The voter must provide:
- Voter’s name and home address
- Voter’s date of birth and daytime phone number
- Voter’s mailing address, if different from home address

REQUESTING MAIL BALLOTS FOR OTHERS:
An immediate family member or guardian may request a ballot for you; they must provide:
- Voter’s information listed above
- Requester’s relationship to the voter
- Requester’s name and home address
- Requester’s daytime phone number
Check your ballot status at www.votepinellas.com.

PICKING UP SOMEONE ELSE’S BALLOT

By signed letter, a voter may designate another person to pick up his/her mail ballot no sooner than the 5th day prior to an election. The designee must provide a picture ID and complete an affidavit.
**VOTING YOUR MAIL BALLOT**

Use a black ballpoint ink pen to completely fill in the oval next to each selection on your ballot. If you make a mistake on your ballot, call (727) 464-6788 to request a replacement ballot.

**RETURNING YOUR VOTED MAIL BALLOT**

To return your voted mail ballot, insert it in the secrecy envelope, then insert the secrecy envelope in the return envelope. Seal the return envelope. Sign and date the back of the envelope. Put required postage on the envelope and mail your ballot, or deliver the ballot to any Elections Office by 7 p.m. on Election Day. (See page 15 for locations.) Additional ballot dropoff sites may be designated for some elections.

A voted mail ballot cannot be accepted at a polling place on Election Day.

**EARLY VOTING**

- You may vote early at any Pinellas County Supervisor of Elections Office.
- Early voting begins 15 days prior to any federal, state or county election and ends the Sunday prior to the election; municipalities are not required to provide early voting for their elections.
- Early voting hours are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday; and 8 a.m. to noon, Saturday and Sunday in all three Elections Offices.
- Voting procedures will be the same as on Election Day (See pgs. 8-10).
WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE POLLS

VOTING ON ELECTION DAY
POLS ARE OPEN 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M.

• You are required to vote in the precinct where you live. Your voter information card shows your precinct number, or you can use the Find Your Precinct feature online at www.votepinellas.com. (If your polling place or precinct has changed, you will receive a new voter information card prior to a county, state or federal election.)

• Be sure to bring picture and signature ID to the polls. (See page 5 for a list of acceptable forms of ID.)

• Make sure your voter registration information is updated to avoid delays at the polls. (See page 5 for directions on updating your voter record.)

• PROVISIONAL BALLOTS: Voters who do not provide picture and signature ID, or whose eligibility cannot be determined at the polls, may vote a provisional ballot. Immediately following the election, provisional ballots are researched, and if a voter’s eligibility is confirmed, his/her provisional ballot is opened, counted and included along with all other official election results certified to the State.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT THE POLLS:

1. Show your valid and current picture and signature ID.
2. Sign the precinct register above your name.
3. Receive your paper ballot and proceed to a privacy booth.
4. Using the black ballpoint pen provided, completely fill in the oval next to each of your selections.
5. Review your ballot.

6. If you wish to make changes, request another ballot.

7. If you are satisfied with your selections:
   • Take your ballot to the optical scanner in the secrecy folder provided.
   • Insert your ballot into the optical scan feeder.

Ballot inserted in scanner.

• If your ballot is accepted, the scanner will record your votes and place your ballot into a locked ballot box.

• The scanner will alert you to possible ballot errors. If your ballot appears blank, you will be given the option to either ACCEPT the ballot as is, or RETURN it to you for corrections. If your ballot contains one or more overvotes, you will be given the option to either CORRECT YOUR BALLOT or CAST YOUR BALLOT WITH ERRORS. The scanner will NOT alert voters to undervotes.

• If you have any questions, ask a poll worker before you insert the ballot in the scanner. Once a ballot has been ACCEPTED, it cannot be retrieved.

If you need assistance at any time during the voting process, do not hesitate to ask a poll worker for assistance. They are trained to guide you through the process and answer your questions.
An ADA accessible voting machine, the AutoMARK, will be available at each early voting location and Election Day polling place. This ballot marking device uses an optical scan ballot. It allows voters with disabilities the options of an audio function with headset, a Braille keypad, a zoom-in large-print feature, a sip-and-puff device, or a two-switch paddle device.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is Pinellas County using paper ballots?
Effective July 1, 2008, the Florida Legislature mandated that all Florida voters vote a paper optical scan ballot whether voting by mail, at an early voting site or at the polls on Election Day.

What voting equipment does Pinellas County use?
Voters are using the Election Systems & Software DS 200 (Digital Scanner), with the AutoMARK Voter Assist Terminal ballot-marking device for voters with special needs or disabilities.

Have other counties and/or states been using this equipment?
More than 30 counties in Florida have been using voting equipment manufactured by Election Systems & Software for years. Although Pinellas was one of the first counties in the country to use the latest digital scanner model, the DS 200, other Florida counties began using this system in the fall of 2008.

What does the optical scan paper ballot look like?
The paper ballot looks exactly like the mail ballots we have used for years, with the exception that voters now fill in ovals instead of completing arrows.

What happens if I make a mistake on my ballot?
Return the ballot to a poll worker and ask for another one. You can have up to three ballots (including original). You will be asked to place the ballot in a spoiled ballot envelope, seal the envelope and hand it to a poll worker. (The envelope will never be opened unless required by a court.)

What happens if I make a mistake on the third ballot I am allowed?
State law does not allow you to be given a fourth ballot. Your first two spoiled ballots will be in sealed envelopes, so you will need to use your third ballot.

Does it matter how I insert my ballot into the optical scanner?
No. You can place either end of the ballot into the scanner, with either side up.

How do I know that my vote is being counted?
The scanner screen message indicates your votes are being recorded and your ballot has been accepted.

What happens if I do not vote in ALL races?
The optical scanner will alert you if it does not detect any votes on the ballot. You will have the option to accept the ballot as is or have it returned to you for corrections.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS  
– continued

What happens if I do not vote one or more of the races?  
The optical scanner will accept your ballot and count all races voted.

What happens if I vote for too many candidates?  
The optical scanner will alert you if you select too many candidates in a 
race, or overvote. You will have the option to correct your ballot or cast your ballot with errors.

How will I correct a ballot with one or more overvotes?  
An overvoted ballot cannot be corrected. A poll worker will give you a “spoiled ballot” envelope for your first ballot and then give you a new ballot.

Can I write in a candidate?  
Only races in which there is a qualified write-in candidate will provide a space to write in a candidate’s name and fill in the oval, and only votes for qualified write-in candidates will be counted.

Can I change my ballot once it has been read and accepted by the optical scanner?  
No. Once a ballot has been accepted, it cannot be retrieved.

Is there a paper trail?  
Yes. Your paper ballot secured in the ballot box is the official record of your votes and is available for recounts or audits.

How long are paper ballots kept?  
Any ballots with federal races or issues must be retained for 22 months. All other ballots must be kept for 12 months.

In the event of scanner failure, what happens to my ballot?  
The voter has the option to wait until a replacement scanner arrives or place the ballot in the auxiliary portion of the ballot box to be processed through the scanner after the polls close.

In the event of a power outage, what happens to my ballot?  
The internal backup battery allows the scanner to continue operating.

If I receive a paper ballot in the mail and decide to vote at the polling place can I do this?  
Yes. The simplest way to do this is to bring your mail ballot to your polling place and ask a poll worker to cancel the ballot so you can vote at the polling place.
VOTER RIGHTS
Each registered voter in this state has the right to:

1. Vote and have his or her vote accurately counted.
2. Cast a vote if he or she is in line at the official closing of the polls in that county.
3. Ask for and receive assistance in voting.
4. Receive up to two replacement ballots if he or she makes a mistake prior to the ballot being cast.
5. An explanation if his or her registration or identity is in question.
6. If his or her registration or identity is in question, cast a provisional ballot.
7. Written instructions to use when voting, and, upon request, oral instructions in voting from elections officers.
8. Vote free from coercion or intimidation by elections officers or any other person.
9. Vote on a voting system that is in working condition and that will allow votes to be accurately cast.

VOTER RESPONSIBILITIES
Each registered voter in this state has the responsibility to:

1. Familiarize himself or herself with the candidates and issues.
2. Maintain with the office of the supervisor of elections a current address.
3. Know the location of his or her polling place and its hours of operation.
4. Bring proper identification to the polling station.
5. Familiarize himself or herself with the operation of the voting equipment in his or her precinct.
6. Treat precinct workers with courtesy.
7. Respect the privacy of other voters.
8. Report any problems or violations of election laws to the supervisor of elections.
9. Ask questions, if needed.
10. Make sure that his or her completed ballot is correct before leaving the polling station.
2010-2011
ELECTION DATES

2010 PRIMARY ELECTION
August 24
Registration Deadline: July 26
Early Voting: August 9 – 22

2010 GENERAL ELECTION
November 2
Registration Deadline: October 4
Early Voting: October 18 – 31

2011 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS
March 8

2011 MUNICIPAL PRIMARY
August 30

2011 MUNICIPAL GENERAL ELECTIONS
November 8

For updated election dates:
Call (727) 464-6788
Or visit www.votepinellas.com and click on Current Elections
Visit www.votepinellas.com
For information on:

Voter registration status
Mail ballot status
Current elections
Polling place lists
Sample ballots
Becoming a poll worker
Elected officials
Voter statistics

Pinellas County complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
To obtain accessible formats of this document, please call (727) 464-6788. If using TDD, contact the Florida Relay Service at 1-800-955-8771.

SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS OFFICES

• Pinellas County Courthouse
  315 Court Street, Room 117
  Clearwater, FL 33756
  Phone: (727) 464-6788   Fax: (727) 464-4158

• Election Service Center
  Starkey Lakes Corporate Center
  13001 Starkey Road
  Largo, FL 33773
  Phone: (727) 464-6788   Fax: (727) 464-6239

• County Building
  501 First Avenue North
  (Entrance on 5th Street North)
  St. Petersburg, FL 33701
  Phone: (727) 464-6788   Fax: (727) 582-7798
This Voter Guide is published in June of even-numbered years. For updated election information between publications, please visit www.votepinellas.com.